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THE CEREMONY DÉCOR Guests sat in wooden garden chairs beneath a magnolia tree strung with glass lanterns filled with ivory pillar candles and rose petals.

elegant & exotic

EMILY & PANKAJ • APRIL 21 • CHARLESTON, SC

Emily Cannon (who's 28 and a jewelry business owner) and Pankaj Gupta (who's 32 and works in private equity) decided to throw a wedding with this rule in mind: equal parts Indian culture and Southern hospitality. Once they got engaged (and returned from their surprise trip to Paris!), this New York City couple set their sights on Charleston, in the bride's home state of South Carolina, and hired a local event planner to help coordinate not one, but two ceremonies and a reception for 300 guests. The day began with a Hindu ceremony in honor of the groom's heritage, which was complete with live, traditional Indian music. Afterward, Emily and Pankaj exchanged vows in a Christian ceremony beneath a hundred-year-old magnolia tree. What followed was a sophisticated party awash in a palette of red and gold accents.



love it!
Lush, oversized garden roses—so simple yet so chic.



THE LOCATION The William Aiken House, a pretty, buttery yellow, nineteenth-century estate in the heart of Charleston's historic district, was home to all of the wedding's festivities. When the guests first arrived, they were introduced to the couple's style—the estate's wrought-iron gates were draped in gold fabric and strung with white orchids.

THE CEREMONY In the morning, Emily and Pankaj's Hindu ceremony took place in the garden beneath a mandap, a traditional Indian canopy, made from rich red fabric strung with marigolds and orchids. Later that afternoon, the pair had a Christian ceremony before a pergola decorated with two large wreaths packed with bright red roses.

THE BRIDAL STYLE Two dresses were definitely in order for the two ceremonies. For the Hindu nuptials, Emily donned a bright red and gold, beaded, handmade, Indian lengha. She later walked down the aisle in a simple yet elegant silk dupioni gown with a sweetheart neckline and ruched bodice by Pronovias. She carried a bouquet of white roses and sweet peas.

THE BRIDESMAID LOOKS The simple yet elegant bridesmaid bouquets, which featured three bright red, oversized garden roses, popped against each maid's gold satin Vera Wang cocktail dress.

THE RECEPTION DÉCOR Both inside and outside the William Aiken House, tables were dressed in gold linens and topped with centerpieces of pillar candles, yellow and fuchsia orchids, red roses, and India-inspired votive candles.

THE CAKE For a fashionable twist on their wedding cake, Emily's baker re-created the look of her veil's lace trim in white frosting on top of gold-tinted icing. On the middle tier, the couple's monogram gave it another personal touch. Even the flavors coordinated with the wedding colors, as chocolate and buttercake alternated with fresh raspberry filling.

THE FIRST DANCE The newlyweds shared their first dance to "By Your Side," by Sade, which was performed by a local band called Heart & Soul.

INGREDIENTS Site William Aiken House
Photography Marni Rothschild Pictures
Event Planning Kristin Newman Designs
Flowers Heather Barrie of Gathering Floral • Event Design Cake Wedding Cakes by Jim Smeal, LLC